

Message Text

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ACTION HEW-06

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PASS HEW FOR SECRETARY MATHEWS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, OTRA, SA, US

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF HEALTH'S VISIT TO U.S. POSTPONED UNTIL
AT LEAST 1977

REF: (A) STATE 246036, (B) STATE 246035

1. CHARGE CALLED ON MINISTER OF HEALTH AL-JAZA'IRI
OCTOBER 20, TO DISCUSS MINISTER'S INTEREST IN A FAMILIAR-
IZATION TOUR OF THE UNITED STATES. CHARGE SAID THAT HE
UNDERSTOOD THAT AL-JAZA'IRI HAD ALREADY BEEN INFORMED OF
THE DATES THAT SECRETARY OF HEW MATHEWS PROPOSED FOR THE
VISIT, AND THAT THESE DATES WERE NOT POSSIBLE
FOR THE MINISTER BECAUSE OF HEAVY RESPONSIBILITIES THAT THE
MINISTRY OF HEALTH HAD TO ASSUME DURING THE PERIOD OF ITS
BUDGET PREPARATION AND ABOVE ALL, THE PILGRIMAGE.
ACCORDINGLY, THE CHARGE UNDERSTOOD THAT THE MINISTER WOULD
NOT BE ABLE TO COME AS PLANNED, BUT HOPED TO RESCHEDULE THE
VISIT SOMETIME IN 1977. THE MINISTER INDICATED THIS WAS
SO. THE CHARGE REPLIED THAT, UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES,
IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE FOR US TO SPEAK FIRMLY ABOUT THE
TIMING OF A VISIT IN 1977. THIS WOULD NECESSARILY HAVE
TO BE LEFT UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS, BUT CHARGED ASSURED
THE MINISTER THAT WE ATTACH MUCH IMPORTANCE TO THE
DESIRABILITY OF HIS VISITING OUR COUNTRY AND REVIEWING
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OUR HEALTH DELIVERY SYSTEMS. ACCORDINGLY, THE EMBASSY

WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH THE MINISTER AGAIN IN THE FOLLOWING YEAR, AND AT THE APPROPRIATE TIME WOULD SUBMIT VARIOUS PROPOSALS FOR THE MINISTER'S CONSIDERATION.

2. AL-JAZA'IRI REPLIED THAT HE APPRECIATED THE CHARGE'S VISIT, AND HE HOPED HE COULD UNDERSTAND WHY HE COULD NOT, AT THIS TIME, ACCEPT SECRETARY MATHEWS' GRACIOUS INVITATION. HE WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO COME TO THE U.S. IN THE NEXT YEAR, AND LOOKS FORWARD TO HEARING FROM THE EMBASSY ABOUT THE TIMING AND THE CONTENTS OF A POSSIBLE PROGRAM. HE ADDED THAT THE BEST MONTHS FOR HIM TO VISIT THE U.S. WOULD BE THOSE OF THE SPRING AND SUMMER. AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING HE INTRODUCED TWO OF HIS ASSISTANTS, SAMEER ISLAM, ASST. DEPUTY MINISTER OF HEALTH, AND NASIR MUTAWA, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING, WHOM HE SAID BOTH HAD STUDIED FOR MANY YEARS IN THE UNITED STATES.

HE HAD SEEN MEDICAL SYSTEMS OF OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN NATIONS, BUT SAUDI ARABIA WAS NOW PLANNING FOR AN UNPRECEDENTED EXPANSION OF ITS HEALTH SERVICES, AND THE REMARKS OF HIS ASSISTANTS HAD STIRRED HIS INTEREST IN SEEING IF THERE WAS SOME WAY IN WHICH AMERICAN MEDICINE OR TECHNOLOGY COULD CONTRIBUTE TO THE WORK OF HIS OWN MINISTRY.
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